



AIDS NETWORK OF EDMONTON

N E W S L E T T E R

FEBRUARY 15, 1986

VOLUME 1 NUMBER 2

HELLO EVERYONE:

This newsletter is the second in a series geared towards the latest news, information and opinions about AIDS.

We fly under the banner of the AIDS NETWORK

of Edmonton. Your letters or contributions are welcome. Contact the NETWORK office by writing to the AIDS NETWORK of Edmonton, Box 1852, Edmonton, T5J 2P2 or by phoning 426-1516.

EDITORIAL BY KARL SIEGFRIED

A month or two ago an article written about AIDS was left at one of the clubs. The article came from that prestigious medical journal of female anatomy --Penthouse-- and was intitled "The AIDS Cover-Up" by Gary Null.

The AIDS NETWORK would like you to know that they had no knowledge nor any part with the distribution of this piece of mis-information.

For those of you who have not read this article, the upshot is AIDS is caused by a vitamin C deficiency (scurvy).

While there are many unknowns about AIDS, the putative cause of AIDS is the retrovirus "HTLV-III/LAV". If the AIDS health crisis is simply a nutritional problem or could be remedied by supplementing one's diet, the disease would not have killed those many thousands of people. In spite of Mr. Null's contention of a cover-up, the scientific/medical community, with all its problems, is not conspiratorial.

Mr. Null has a right to his opinions, but his article is uncredible. Any merit his article may have had was quickly lost by his

misrepresentation of the "facts". The mistakes made are numerous and I shall give a couple of examples. He mentions in the second paragraph the incidence of "protective antibody". It has not yet been established that the antibody produced in response to infection by HTLV-III imparts immunity--partial or complete.

Another brief example, he said Kaposi's Sarcoma is not a cancer but is an infection. Kaposi's Sarcoma (KS) is a cancer, and while the cancer has an association (in gay men) with a virus called cytomegalovirus (CMV), (CMV is found in high frequency in gay populations). The significance of this association is not yet understood. He implies understanding.

Every mistake or misrepresentation erodes the credibility of any information he has attempted to present. There is no merit to the article.

I would ask the clubs to police the materials they display about AIDS. If they have any suspicions or questions, AIDS NETWORK or the Edmonton Interagency Council on Aids should be consulted.

AFTER THE TEST.....?????

In January's News letter, we pointed out to our readers that the HTLV-III Antibody Test was inconclusive. Some people however, have already taken the test, or are planning to take it.

It is important to reiterate that in Canada you cannot be tested anonymously. (Only in certain American states is this possible.) Because of the fact that in Canada medical files are handled and read by many persons, and because medical records can be subpoenaed, some people prefer to use false names and false addresses when they visit the Sexually Transmitted Disease Clinic (10105 - 109 St.).

If you have been tested or are planning to be, please consider this: assuming that you have been celibate or that you have been practicing

safe sex since your first test was administered, you must then take the test repeatedly at three month intervals. Because the body requires time to produce antibodies, you could have the virus and still test negative, only producing antibodies later on. Therefore, if over a period of a year or two your test results are consistently negative, then the likelihood of your having the virus diminishes.

When we talk about AIDS and AIDS Antibody Testing, there are few absolutes and no guarantees. Tested or untested, positive or negative, the message is the same: abstinence aside, the best defense against AIDS remains safer sex practices.

STAY HEALTHY. PLAY SAFE.

NEWS ITEMS

The AIDS NETWORK of Edmonton Society! We hope that will be the official name of the AIDS NETWORK. We have submitted all the appropriate documents to the Corporate Registry and we await their reply. At that time, we will be an Alberta registered non-profit society.

Sources close to the AIDS NETWORK have told us that Dr. Neil Webber, Minister of Social Services and Community Health (now former minister) has again turned down funding for AIDS projects in Alberta. This makes it his third refusal to recognize the importance of educating people about AIDS and the necessity of providing services to people with AIDS.

SPECIAL THANKS

We are very grateful to GATE for believing in the necessity of an AIDS Committee, its sponsorship of the AIDS NETWORK, the use it has given us of its name and official status, and of course, the very real tangible support of its members.

OTHER SPECIAL THANKS

To Walter, Larry, Shelley, Karl, Randy and Michael. Also to Tom H. for giving us a photocopier.

RECENT AIDS STATISTICS

As of January 6, 1986, the Laboratory for Disease Control in Ottawa recorded a total of 435 adult cases of AIDS in Canada. Latest Alberta figures show that of the 26 cases in

this province, 13 are living. There were 20 in Calgary, with 10 living, and 5 in Edmonton, of whom 3 are living.

AND.....

In the Canadian Edition of Blueboy, Volume 9, No. 3, there was an article dealing with safe sex practices. When it came to the don'ts, three of the items were censored! In Canada,

it seems, dirty words are more dangerous than risky sex. Such puritanism has always been deadening; in this case it could be deadly as well.

CLUB SUPPORT

Wednesday Night at Flashback will continue to be "Men's Night", but it will also be AIDS NETWORK of Edmonton Night. During this time

25 cents from each beer and high ball sold will be donated. In addition, all proceeds from the coat check will be donated.

AIDS NETWORK FUND-RAISING EVENT:

Feature Film: TIMES OF HARVEY MILK

Tuesday March 4th, 7:00 p.m.,

ROXY THEATRE (10708 - 124 Street)

Tickets available from Larry Courcelles 488-3155

UPCOMING EVENTS

Forum on AIDS: Don't Get Scared, Get Smart

Tuesday, March 11, 1986 7:00 - 10:00 p.m.

Edmonton Convention Centre Free Admission

Sponsored by the Inter-Agency Council on AIDS: The AIDS NETWORK of Edmonton, Alberta Social Services and Community Health, Canadian Red Cross Blood Transfusion Service, Edmonton Local Board of Health, Health Services Administration and Community Medicine (U of A), Health and Welfare Canada.

Name changer strikes again

By Bruce Masterman
(Herald High River bureau)

The southern Alberta school official responsible for changing the name of teacher and clerical "aides" to "assistants" because of widespread publicity about AIDS has struck again.

Ernie Patterson, deputy superintendent of the Claresholm-based Willow Creek School Division, now has convinced the school board to eliminate the word "vice" from vice-principal.

But, Patterson stressed Wednesday, the change wasn't prompted by a desire to escape the word's connotations of corruption or immorality.

"I don't want to get too Puritan an image," he said in a telephone interview.

Patterson said that by accepting his recommendation to replace "vice" with "assistant," the school board has

simply clarified the position's job description.

He said school divisions in larger centres have three levels of in-school administrators: principals, assistant principals — people with broad administrative duties — and vice-principals, whom Patterson said have more-specific, narrower responsibilities than those of assistants.

Renaming the division's "dozen or so" assistant principals better reflects the job they actually do, said Patterson, a Claresholm town councillor and former mayor who doesn't deny he's considering running for mayor in this fall's municipal election.

Patterson received national attention last fall when the Willow Creek board approved his recommendation to eliminate the word "aides" as it related to teachers and clerical staff.

At the time, he said adoption of the word "assistants" would add "more dignity" to the estimated 30 positions involved and eliminate any confusion with AIDS (acquired immune deficiency syndrome).

* reprinted from Calgary Herald
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